

"Do you want to go for a ride on it?" I said. I knew she probably did. When she was a tiny little kid, and Allie and D.B. and I used to go to the park with her, she was mad about the carousel. You couldn't get her off the goddam thing.

"I'm too big," she said....

"No, you're not. Go on. I'll wait for ya. Go on," I said....

"Aren't you gonna ride, too?" she asked me. She was looking at me sort of funny. You could tell she wasn't too sore at me any more.

"Maybe I will the next time. I'll watch ya," I said.

"Got your ticket?"

"Yes."

"Go ahead, then-- I'll be on this bench right over here. I'll watch ya." I went over and sat down on this bench, and she went and got on the carousel. She walked all around it. I mean she walked once all the way around it. Then she sat down on this big, brown, beat-up-looking old horse. Then the carousel started, and I watched her go around and around. There were only about five or six other kids on the ride, and the song the carousel was playing was "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes." It was playing it very jazzy and funny. All the kids kept trying to grab for the gold ring, and so was old Phoebe, and I was soft of afraid she'd fall off the goddam horse, but I didn't say anything or do anything. The thing with kids is, if they want to grab for the gold ring, you have to let them do it, and not say anything. If they fall off, they fall off, but it's bad if you say anything to them.

When the ride was over she got off her horse and came over to me. "You ride once, too, this time," she said.

"No, I'll just watch ya. I think I'll just watch," I said.

I gave her some more of her dough. "Here. Get some more tickets."

She took the dough off me. "I'm not mad at you any more," she said.

"I know. Hurry up-- the thing's gonna start again."

Then all of a sudden she gave me a kiss. Then she held her hand out, and said, "It's raining. It's starting to rain."

"I know."

Then what she did-- it damn near killed me-- she reached in my coat pocket and took out my hat.

"Don't you want it?" I said.

"You can wear it a while."

"Okay. Hurry up, though, now. You're gonna miss your ride. You won't get your own horse or anything."

She kept hanging around, though.

"Did you mean it what you said? You really aren't going away anywhere? Are you really going home afterwards?" she asked me.

"Yeah," I said. I meant it, too. I wasn't lying to her. I really did go home afterwards. "Hurry up, now," I said.

The thing's starting.

She ran and bought her ticket and got back on the goddam carousel just in time. Then she walked all the way around it till she got her own horse back. Then she got on it. She waved to me and I waved back.

Boy, it began to rain like a bastard. In buckets, I swear to God. All the parents and mothers and everybody went over and stood under the roof of the carousel, so they wouldn't get soaked to the skin or anything, but I stuck around on the bench for quite a while. I got pretty soaking wet, especially my neck and my pants. My hunting hat really gave me quite a lot of protection, in a way, but I got soaked anyway. I didn't care, though. I felt so damn happy all of a sudden, the way old Phoebe kept going around and around. I was damn near bawling, I felt so damn happy, if you want to know the truth. I don't know why. It was just that she looked so damn nice, the way she kept going around and around, in her blue coat and all. God, I wish you could've been there.

"carrousel in the eye" wants to catch her and let her have childhood fun

H. = growing up, took for ride, nostalgic feeling, needs to move on, too old

still wants to experience with him, no judging.



Pay particular attention to the symbolism behind the carousel.

Phoebe

catching them up to a point, but needs to let them go at one point, reach for dreams, so doesn't end up like H.

What other symbol does reaching for the gold ring bring to mind? What does this mean? Has anything changed?

watching almost like a parent, because no longer a child

Why doesn't Holden ride the carousel with Phoebe?

Pay particular attention to the symbolism behind the red hunting hat.

tears sadness

Phoebe is protecting Holden

Why does Holden finally decide to go home?

Why does Holden feel ppy? What has changed?

Cathartic cleansing in the spiritual sense

Phoebe gave him hat - she wants to protect him and the hat is part of his individuality. She covers him just the way he is.

